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Front row, left to right, former state Representative Harry Brooks, Knox County Sheriff Tom Spangler, Knox County Law Director Bud Armstrong, Knox County Property Assessor John Whitehead, Deputy Knox County Law Director David Busch, 8th District School Board member Mike McMillan. Back row: Focus Publisher Steve Hanley, former 8th District Commissioner Jack Haddleton, Knox County Clerk Sherry Whitt, 8th District Commissioner Richie Beeler, and former Knox County Commissioner John Mills.

Richie Beeler kicks off election campaign in Corryton

By Ken Lay

Richie Beeler kicked off his election campaign for Knox County Commission Tuesday night at the Corryton Senior and Community Center and his supporters came in droves.

Beeler, who will seek his first full term representing the Eighth District, was appointed to replace Dave Wright, who vacated the seat to serve in the state legislature.

The election is in 2020 but Beeler said that he didn't want to waste time and he also noted that he wanted to formally announce his candidacy in Corryton.

"I wanted to let the home folks know first," Beeler said before addressing the multitudes of supporters present Tuesday night. "The election is in March of 2020, so we

really don't have a lot of time. It's a presidential year and you have to go along with that."

"Early voting is in February and you don't have a lot of time to campaign during the holidays, during Thanksgiving and Christmas, so I'm ready to hit the ground running."

He also said that he felt that announcing his candidacy in Corryton was the right thing for him to do.

"I feel like Corryton is the right place because I have deep roots in Corryton," Beeler said. "My roots are the deepest in Corryton. I'm excited and honored to have the chance to represent the eighth district."

"It's the prettiest place in Knox County and the greatest place in the world to live. It's a blessing to live in Knox County and a blessing to live in Northeast Knox County and an

honor to represent the eighth district. There's a lot of land and the eighth district borders five counties."

While this is his first election campaign, Beeler is certainly no stranger to Knox County Commission, having replaced Wright, his friend, during the midterm election.

"I've enjoyed serving on County Commission and it's been a nine-month learning curve," he said. "A lot of the journey has been about building relationships."

While his supporters dined on bologna sandwiches, barbecue and potato chips, Beeler spoke briefly to the crowd, which included former Register of Deeds Steve Hall, Register of Deeds Nick McBride, Knox County Sheriff Tom Spangler, County Law Director Bud Armstrong and

Continue on page 2

Residents challenge city's intentions for Caswell Park

By Mike Steely
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Is part of a Knoxville City Park being sectioned off to become a home for chronic homeless people?

The possible loss of open space on three park lots along East Fifth Avenue is being challenged by Parkridge residents and the matter may come to public hearing sometime this month although a date has not been announced.

Parkridge residents Christopher Salmon and Tanner Jessel have

challenged the city's proposal by issuing a Challenge Grant request for a community garden there as an alternate use of the three lots being considered as a homeless dwelling.

The city is considering giving the vacant site to Volunteer Ministries for a private residential development but the neighborhood homeowners charge the city, in 2010, deliberately set aside the space in an OS-2 zoning for open space with the idea of

Continued on page 4

Babb elected vice chair of school board

By Anne Primm

At 5:06 p.m. on Wednesday September 11, 2019, the newly elected chair, Susan Horn, called the regular session of the Knox County School Board meeting to order. Eight out of nine board members were physically present for the meeting with First District Representative Evette Satterfield joining by Skype. Chair Horn then announced that on Tuesday, September 17, 2019,

at 5:00 p.m. there will be a TSBA meeting at Maryville High School. Terri Coakley will be contacting those board members who have signed up to attend. Horn also announced that the Annual Board Workshop/Retreat would take place Thursday, September 26 and Friday, September 27, 2019 at a location yet to be determined.

During last week's meeting several members

Continued on page 4

Pellissippi State honors retired

Rep. Harry Brooks with Career Education Center



Retired state Rep. Harry Brooks, third from left, unveils the new Harry Brooks Career Education Center on Pellissippi State's Strawberry Plains Campus on Tuesday, Sept. 10. With Brooks, from left, are Pellissippi State President L. Anthony Wise Jr., Speaker Pro Tempore Bill Dunn of the Tennessee House of Representatives, and Brooks' wife, Mary.

Pellissippi State Community College lauded retired state Rep. Harry Brooks of Knoxville last Tuesday by naming a wing of its Strawberry Plains Campus in his honor.

The Harry Brooks Career Education Center contains Pellissippi State's Mega-Lab as well as its newly expanded cyber operations and welding centers. The campus is located at 7201 Strawberry Plains Pike.

"Rep. Harry Brooks championed career and technical education during his many years in the legislature," said Pellissippi State President L. Anthony Wise Jr. "His advocacy for workforce training, dual credit and dual enrollment promoted career opportunities for students not just at Pellissippi State, but across Tennessee."

Brooks, who was on hand Tuesday to witness the dedication with many friends

and family members, represented District 19, part of Knox County, in the state legislature for eight terms from 2003 until his retirement in 2018. During that time he served myriad committees, including chairing the House Education Committee during the 108th General Assembly and the House Education Administration and Planning Committee during the 109th and 110th General Assemblies. He also served on the Knox County School Board from 1992 until 1996.

"I'll remember this day forever," Brooks said Tuesday. "It's an honor to see your name added to an educational institution, whether it's K-12 or a college, and I don't deserve it. I'm just happy to have been part of a team that made great strides in education in our state, and the future is bright."

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